



ANG

Bayan

PAHAYAGAN NG PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS
PINAPATNUBAYAN NG
MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOISMO

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Editorial

Prepare for and resist continued and escalating US military intervention in the Philippines

US imperialism's real motives for the continued and growing presence of American troops in the country has become ever clearer. There are now several indications that the influx of US troops in the country, particularly in Basilan, will not end with the six-month duration of Balikatan 02-1.

These past months, the US, in conspiracy with the puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime, has gradually been laying the "basis" for the justification of its sinister scheme.

In the beginning, it used its assistance to the AFP in stamping out the Abu Sayyaf and rescuing two American hostages held by the bandit group as a rationalization. These justifications were used to allay intense objections to the presence of US troops in the Philippines.

But although US troops have been here for almost six months, the Abu Sayyaf has yet to be crushed and the American captives yet to be saved. American officials have also expressed openness to paying ransom.

In April, an additional 320 American troops came in and the construction of military infrastructure was begun to accommodate the needs of US military equipment. At the same time, Macapagal-Arroyo has repeatedly declared that she was in favor of extending the stay of American troops in Basilan.



On the other hand, "training exercises" and "coordinated operations" between US and AFP troops have grown ever bigger. From April 22 to May 6, Balikatan 02-2 was launched and participated in by 2,500 American troops.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez and Balikatan co-director Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio have

announced that up to 5,000 American troops would be participating in one of the Balikatan exercises in 2003. In particular, these “training exercises” aim to achieve “interoperability”, or the ability of Philippine troops to integrate smoothly in joining US military operations.

US Pacific Command chief, Adm. Dennis Blair has also expressed the US’ desire to expand its troops’ mission in Mindanao. Blair wants American troops to directly participate in combat operations not only in Basilan but in other parts of Mindanao, beyond its current “training” mission.

All these things point to one objective: The US and the puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime wish to make the presence of American troops permanent and raise imperialist intervention in the Philippines to an even

higher level. Towards this end, they have resorted to all sorts of schemes, legal maneuvers and convoluted arguments.

The entire country is now practically a US military base. This is worse than before because any part of the Philippines may now be used by any number of American troops at any time for their military objectives. Such an arrangement will further be reinforced in planned amendments to the reactionary constitution.


THIS PLAN BY THE U.S. TO MAINTAIN A PERMANENT MILITARY presence is part of the reorientation of its military deployment to further ensure its rule as the sole superpower after the Cold War. This reorientation has been buttressed after the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001.

Accordingly, US troops must position themselves early on in the same area or in an area closest to probable sources of threats to the security and the political and economic interests of the US. Such troops positioned in strategic areas of the globe serve as forward deterrent forces as well as forward combat and expeditionary forces.

To rationalize US presence in the Philippines, Bush and US defense officials have been talking about the existence of a “terrorist network” in Southeast Asia. It is allegedly necessary to deploy American troops in Mindanao to cripple “terrorist” operations in the area. There are also plans to use the island as a forward base that would facilitate access to Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia where “terrorists” are supposed to maintain links and bases. According to the oppressive viewpoint being propagated by the US, the Mindanao-Indonesia-Malaysia triangle is a big potential base for “terrorists” because the world’s largest Muslim population can be found in this area.

Southeast Asia is part of what the US considers a broad “arc of instability” extending from the Middle East to Northeast Asia. The US is currently paying special attention to strengthening its forces in Southeast Asia and other parts of this “arc of instability” where there has been a vacuum or a reduction in US presence in the past and where threats against the stability of US interests have grown stronger. The US fears potential eruption of disorder due to the depth of crises wracking countries within the area as well as the emergence and advance of democratic and patriotic people’s struggles.

Most of all, the US wants to deploy forces in the Philippines to confront one of its most dreaded

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threats—the national-democratic revolutionary movement. The latter and the struggling Moro people are slated to be the targets in the next stage of joint operations of the US military and the AFP.

THE PROBABILITY OF ARMED AGGRESSION grows ever bigger. THE legal and democratic forces must exert even more effort in

exposing, criticizing and opposing such a scheme by US imperialism and its puppet regime. We must lead and mobilize the people to show that a president who shamelessly tramples on Philippine sovereignty cannot hold power for long. Such actions must also have the concrete objective of ejecting all occupation troops from the country.

We are trying our very best to thwart armed aggression. But once composite American and AFP troops attack the territory of the revolutionary movement, they will suffer the blows of a war of national liberation. We must prepare the revolutionary movement and the people's thoughts and organization for such an eventuality. **AB**

People's protests against Balikatan continue

The people have been tirelessly conducting protest actions against Balikatan. In various parts of the country, mass actions, both big and small, continue in opposition to the presence of US troops in the Philippines. Among the most significant are the following:

Protest caravan in Central Luzon. The opening of Balikatan 02-2 on April 22 was met with people's protests. Hundreds launched a protest caravan from Quezon City. Some 2,000 residents of Cabanatuan City joined the caravan that proceeded to Laur, Nueva Ecija where a program was held. It was led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN), Bayan Muna, Kilusang Mayo Uno and GABRIELA. The protesters rallied right in front of Fort Magsaysay despite efforts by Recom 3 to stop the mass action.

Another protest action also led by BAYAN rocked the closing of Balikatan 02-2 in Clark Air Base, Pampanga on May 6. About 1,000 demonstrators formed a human chain around the entrance to Clark. They demanded the immediate departure of American soldiers who had participated in the exercise.

Protest caravan in Southern Tagalog. Some 400 people from Calamba, Laguna launched a caravan on May 5 against the Joint RP-US Military Exercise in Ternate, Cavite. The caravan included 14 vehicles and passed through Trece Martires City, Naic, Maragondon, Tanza, Ternate and Noveleta, all in Cavite. It was led by BAYAN-Southern Tagalog and the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism. The protesters also assailed the continuing militarization of Southern Tagalog.

Policemen tried to stop the protesters from holding

their program when they reached the center of Cavite. Failing at this, the policemen made a ruckus on their own sound system to drown out the rallyists' cries.

Mass action by Aetas. Aetas from Central Luzon launched a protest action against Balikatan 02-2 in front of the US Embassy on April 30. They held a war dance to oppose their eviction from the Crow Valley Gunnery Range in Capas, Tarlac. Crow Valley, which forms part of the Aetas' ancestral lands, is used with every Balikatan exercise. Aside from the 40 Aeta families evicted from Sitio Tarukan due to Balikatan 02-2, another 20 families had earlier been evicted from Durungawan, a hill found within the gunnery range. US soldiers had set up a squadron building atop the hill.



High-ranking US military officials visit Basilan

The successive visits to Basilan of high-ranking US defense and military officials show that the significance of US military presence goes beyond the pursuit of a handful of Abu Sayyaf bandits.

On April 28, Gen. Richard Myers, the head of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and the highest-ranking US military official, visited troops "in training" in Zamboanga City and Basilan—the first such visit since the Balikatan exercises were held in 1981.

On May 7, US Army Department Undersecretary Les Brownlee arrived to inspect US soldiers deployed in Zamboanga and Basilan.

On May 5, Lt. Gen. Wallace Gregson, commander of the US Marines 3rd Expeditionary Force arrived along with 160 more US Special Forces troops.

Jetfighter crashes on school, houses in Mabalacat

An Air Force F-5 Freedom Fighter jet exploded in midair and crashed on the Mabalacat Elementary school in Pampanga on May 2.

Jesus Rivera, a teacher, sustained burns in his entire body and died in hospital, while 10 other civilians were wounded. Four buildings within the school premises were destroyed with the jetfighter's crash.

Victims have expressed concern over a possible repeat of the incident during subsequent military exercises. They were also concerned about suffering the same fate as previous victims of similar accidents who were not paid damages. Prior to this, residents of Mabalacat had expressed misgivings that their town, which is packed with residential areas, was within flying range of the warplanes.

The jetfighter was on its way back to Clark air

Base from landing practice in Ternate, Cavite when it exploded.

Balikatan aircrafts worry Zambales residents

Residents of Barangay Palanginan, Iba, Zambales complained in the last week of April about the noise coming from aircraft used in Balikatan 02-2. They said that low-flying Cobras, Black Hawks and F-18 Hornets have been causing anxiety among their children and upsetting their farm animals.

Meanwhile, fishermen from San Antonio, Zambales expressed concern about their safety because of the mock bombing exercises conducted by these fighter planes. They said that San Antonio lies very near Capones Island, which used to be a favorite target range of American troops. **AB**

Rampant violations of human rights in Sulu



The bigger part of operations conducted by the regime's armed forces against the Abu Sayyaf is comprised, not of actual clashes between the state's soldiers and the bandit group, but of many severe violations of human rights and destruction of lives, communities and properties of civilians.

From March 5-7, a group investigated human rights violations against the people of Sulu in relation to years of militarization in the area. It was composed of representatives from Karapatan; Kapatut, a Moro human rights organization in Zamboanga City; and Concerned Citizens of Sulu (CCS), a group of lawyers, doctors, businessmen, teachers and church leaders advocating the welfare of people affected by military operations against the Abu Sayyaf bandits. The investigation was conducted in the face of intensifying military operations attendant to Balikatan 02-1.

The following have been excerpted from narrations of residents in the villages visited by the group.

Bombings, burning of houses, theft and dislocation

One morning in February, Philippine Air Force planes flew to Barangay Darayan and suddenly started bombing communities and schools. After the bombing, the soldiers came. According to residents, from February 12 to 15, the military burned down 273 houses situated around a school. No one

lives in the area up to now. Anyone found there is accused of being a bandit.

Residents of Barangay Kabbon Takkas who were forced to evacuate due to militarization lived at the Daymala Elementary School for 18 months. On November 22, 2001, three bombs were dropped on the school, causing tension among the evacuees. The military, which was aware of the presence of residents, argued that the pilot had made a mistake in bombing the school.

Because the school was no longer secure, 70 families made a five-hour trek, evacuating from Barangay Kabbon Takkas to Barangay Danag, Patikul. They are now cramped inside classrooms at the Danag Elementary and High School. The evacuees wait outside the classrooms while classes are held during the day. Others have set up makeshift dwellings in the schoolyard. Some children have suffered from skin ailments that, residents say, developed after their areas were bombed.

On November 21, 2001, the 7th IB robbed and burned down the house of Radzata Usman, a teacher from Barangay Caunayan. She related that her family left their home on November 19 because of an armed encounter between the military and the Abu Sayyaf in nearby Barangay Buhanginan. They left their household appliances behind. After two days, the military conducted an operation in Barangay Caunayan. The military's guide warned her to bring out her family belongings because the military was going to burn down their house. The house had already been burned by the time she got there. There were signs that the military robbed them before torch-

ing the house. The soldiers also cut down their banana and bamboo trees. The military burned down 18 houses in this rampage. Most of the villagers have not yet been able to return to Barangay Caunayan.

Some houses were also burned in Barangay Buhanginan. In some areas, the military stole and slaughtered the residents' farm animals. The villagers said that the animals were brought out aboard military trucks.

Killings

On September 18, 2000, the military conducted operations in Barangay Darayan, Patikul. The military killed a man who refused to join the evacuation and burned his body. Also in September, military troops burned the body of Abdumasul Salani, 19, after arbitrarily shooting him down as they met him walking from the school. Only the back of his head was unburnt.

According to the CCS, 22 civilians remain missing since the military began conducting pursuit operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

Hunger and clashes between civilians and the military

Severe hunger plagues residents of the area. They are unable to attend to their crops lest they be mistaken for Abu Sayyaf members and be shot at. They might also be hit by bombs. Despite such danger to their lives, some residents have armed themselves and dared to go to their farms just to be able to get food. Whenever they figure in clashes with the military, the AFP reports the incidents to the mass media as encounters with the Abu Sayyaf. **AB**

Regime terminates peace talks



Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has further manifested her militarist character. In a decision mandated by her imperialist master, Macapagal-Arroyo has effectively terminated the peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

In a decision taken by the NDFP National Executive Committee on April 12 in accordance with the recommendation of the NDFP Negotiating Panel and the Chief Political Consultant, the NDFP condemned the following measures taken by Macapagal-Arroyo:

1 Her abandonment of the framework for negotiations laid down in The Hague Joint Declaration, Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees and the Joint Agreement on the Formation, Sequence and Operationalization of the Reciprocal Working Committees;

2 Her having rescinded the major agreements formally signed and approved by the principals of the NDFP and GRP from 1992 to 2001, including agreements formally signed and approved by the NDFP and GRP negotiating panels in the same period;

3 Her termination of formal peace negotiations between the GRP

and the NDFP. So-called back channel talks between GRP and NDFP emissaries have been substituted instead. The persistence of such talks presumes the surrender of the NDFP and the demobilization of the New People's Army (NPA). This is based on the GRP's erroneous belief that the NDFP fears the mercenary military, police and paramilitary forces of the puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime and US military intervention.

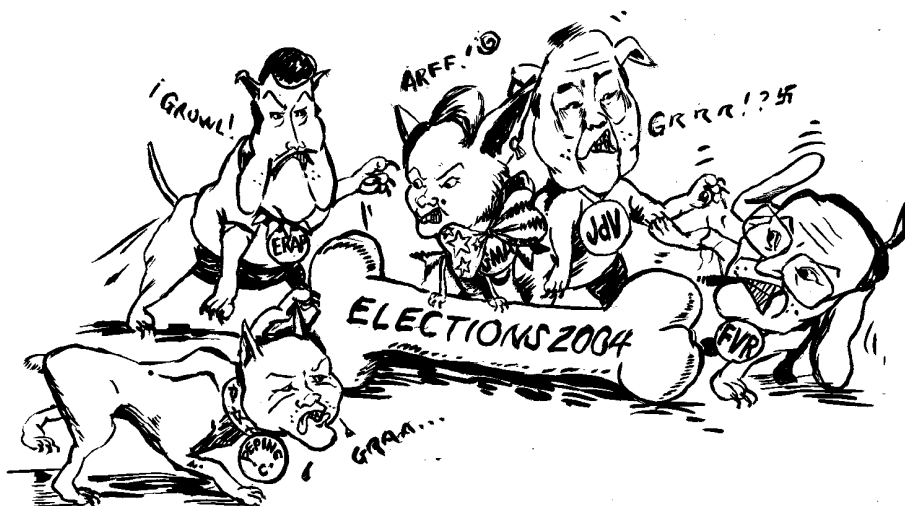
In reality, Macapagal-Arroyo has not shown any seriousness with regards to the peace talks since the beginning of her term. In May, she arbitrarily and unilaterally terminated the peace negotiations. She justified the move, citing the punishment of a number of rabid enemies of the people and the revolutionary movement.

The regime now rationalizes that it has completely lost interest in peace talks, saying that negotiations with armed movements are now passé after the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001.

With utmost arrogance, the regime threatens the revolutionary movement by saying that US military intervention would continue unless the NPA surrenders. The Macapagal-Arroyo regime forgets that for the past 33 years, US imperialism and its past puppet regimes have failed to defeat the armed struggle and annihilate the revolutionary forces. The NPA now stands ever solid and determined to wage resistance.

Macapagal-Arroyo has clearly shown her contempt for the agreements forged between the NDFP and the GRP. This constitutes a refusal to identify and resolve the roots of the armed conflict between the reactionary government and the revolutionary forces. **AB**

Take advantage of intensifying conflicts among the reactionaries



The Macapagal-Arroyo regime is fast becoming isolated from the Filipino people due to its failure to resolve socio-economic problems, its severe corruption, its having completely allowed the entry of American troops, its militarism and scuttling of the peace process.

In demonstrations held in Manila and other parts of the country on May 1, about 75,000 workers called for the ouster of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime. Prior to this, thousands of women staged a demonstration and assailed Macapagal-Arroyo as a "traitor to the motherland". Since February, there have been continuing protests in Manila and other cities against the launching of Balikatan. There have also been successive demonstrations by various oppressed sectors in defense of their interests.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime is fast becoming isolated even from the urban petty bourgeoisie who participated in their numbers in the EDSA 2 demonstrations. More and more of them are joining alliances of various patriotic and democratic forces against issues like corruption, the oil price hike, rising charges for electricity and water services and US armed intervention.

Macapagal-Arroyo's labored attempts to deodorize herself

Even surveys conducted by bourgeois institutions could not cover up the fact that Macapagal-Arroyo's popularity is fast declining.

Macapagal-Arroyo desperately tried to improve her popularity by issuing new P200 bills with the images of her father, a former president, at the obverse and hers at the reverse; by visiting urban poor communities and making a show of giving out land titles; and coming up with other sophisms. A multi-million peso advertisement that had planned to depict her as “Inang Bayan” (*the people’s mother*) and deodorize her image, failed and was pelted with criticism.

Another gimmick that Macapagal-Arroyo had intended to enhance her image involved seizing the initiative in calling for a summit of all political parties in the country, a plan originally conceived by the reactionary opposition. In the so-called All Political Parties Conference held on May 3-5, Macapagal-Arroyo, together with Speaker Jose de Venecia, convened 21 political parties, mostly identified with her own camp. This included Lakas-NUCD, Nationalist People’s Coalition, Liberal Party, Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas and a number of small opportunist party-list groups.

The Macapagal-Arroyo camp had intended to use the conference to unite with various political parties on certain political agenda. But the conference was boycotted by the leading reactionary opposition parties, the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and the PDP-Laban. In justifying their move, they cited an alleged plan to arrest some opposition leaders and the blocking by the police of workers and other demonstrators from Southern Tagalog en route to Manila to join a rally on May 1.

Bayan Muna likewise refused

to attend in protest of the severe violence and suppression being perpetrated against its leaders and forces by the state’s armed forces. Bayan Muna likewise had no interest in attending a gathering of elitist political parties and assisting in efforts to enhance the image of the ruling clique.

The participants to the conference resolved to convene a constitutional convention to amend the reactionary 1987 constitution (*see related article*) among other matters. But this remains a proposal and must go through the legislative wringer.

The conference turned out to be an exercise in futility, with the Macapagal-Arroyo camp talking to itself.

Conflicts within the Macapagal-Arroyo camp

The intensification of long-simmering conflicts within the Macapagal-Arroyo camp has recently burst out in the open. A faction within the camp has formed the Freedom Force led by Teodoro Benigno, Cesar Sarino, Pastor Saycon, Peping Cojuangco, former PNP Chief Supt. Florencio Fianza among others. Benigno was Press Secretary under former

president Corazon Aquino and is now a newspaper columnist. Cesar Sarino is known to be close to former president Fidel Ramos. Pastor Saycon heads the Council of Philippine Affairs (COPA), one of the groups that ousted the Estrada regime. COPA had even then wanted to set up a civilian-military junta, but was unable to do so when it was overtaken by the sudden turn of events in Edsa 2. There are allegedly 19 high-ranking military and police officials behind this group now.

The Freedom Force says it fears that “the deteriorating conditions in the country are in danger of being exploited by the extreme Left and extreme Right”, and has thus proposed to replace the current leadership with the “collective leadership of the middle forces”.

The group, however, failed in its attempt to secure the blessing of Jaime Cardinal Sin.

Malacañang also took action to prevent the group from using government facilities. Pastor Saycon’s wife Maria Montelibano was removed from her post as IBC 13 director. The group has been silenced for now.

Estrada camp’s desperation

From the very beginning, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has wanted to strike a compromise with the Estrada camp to protect the stability of the current government.

Among others, the compromises that the regime had been prepared to grant included the extension of several privileges to Estrada during detention and allowing him to take a trip to the US supposedly to seek medical treatment. In exchange, the Estrada camp secretly offered to stop destabilizing the Macapagal-Arroyo regime. But all this has come to naught with the persistent vigilance of militant groups.



Since May 1, 2001, the Estrada camp has been attempting to overthrow Macapagal-Arroyo by funding and instigating attacks on Malacañang. Conflicts between the two camps have escalated to this level.

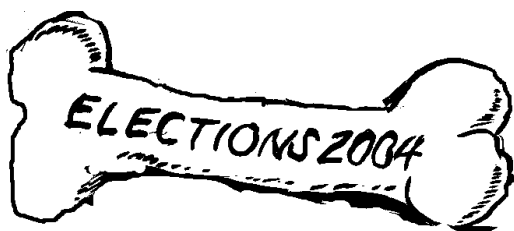
The Estrada camp planned a new round of actions for April and May this year. Part of the plan was a drama that had Estrada refusing to participate in his trial. The Estradas wanted to gain public sympathy and use this to incite street demonstrations and other actions outside of the legal or constitutional framework. But such attempts by the Estrada camp failed and immediately fizzled out.

Due to the regime's fears of a repeat of last year's incident, it deployed an excessive number of police forces around Malacañang and other areas in Manila to block pro-Estrada forces from any attempt to reattack Malacañang this May 1. They arrested the leader of the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP) responsible for busing in pro-Estrada demonstrators.

To attain bigger numbers for their demonstration on May 1, they coordinated with the opportunist and counterrevolutionary group Sanlakas. The People's Consultative Assembly (PCA), erstwhile pro-Ramos and also a former ally of the Macapagal-Arroyo camp, has likewise joined the Estrada camp. But the Estrada camp failed to mobilize enough forces and resorted to psywar instead to intimidate the regime. In its intensifying desperation to return to power, the Estrada camp will continue to foment even more trouble and schemes before and during the 2004 elections.

Favorable to the revolutionary movement

The further isolation of the ruling regime and the trend towards violent conflicts among reactionary factions are favorable to the revolutionary movement. This must be taken advantage of to the fullest to strengthen the revolutionary forces and target the principal agent of US imperialism. At the same time, it is necessary to explain to the



people the difference between the progressive and revolutionary forces on the one hand, and the various reactionary and opportunist groups courting the support of the masses on the other.

The revolutionary movement will continue to resist the regime currently in power that reeks from the stench of corruption, militarism and puppetry. As the Party has declared, the revolutionary movement is prepared to resist successive reactionary regimes while it accumulates enough strength to overthrow the entire ruling system. **AB**

On the planned Constitutional Convention

THE 1987 CONSTITUTION IS A REACTIONARY DOCUMENT and serves only the interests of the ruling classes and the foreign monopoly capitalists. Currently, there are moves to make it even worse by amending it. The people will gain nothing from such plans.

The All Political Parties Conference called by Macapagal-Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia on May 3-5 was able to unite on the conduct of a Constitutional Convention.

Amendments to the constitution have long been demanded by the US and past regimes.

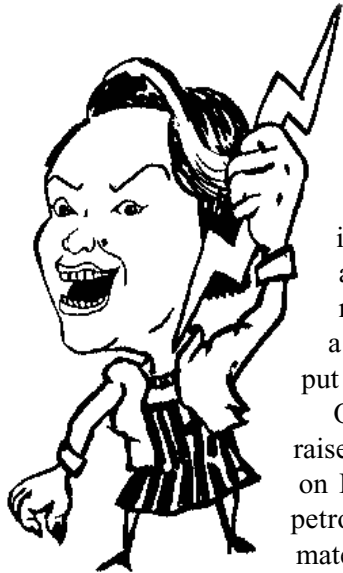
Claims by reactionary politicians that this would resolve the many problems besetting the people are pure deception. In truth, this is merely an attempt to derail the people's attention from the roots of their suffering.

Among the amendments being planned are various provisions that would remove or reduce limitations on the term limits of high-ranking government officials.

Another significant amendment is the withdrawal of provisions that obstruct the complete auctioning off of the national patrimony and the implementation of policies of imperialist "globalization".

The US and reactionary politicians would also like to remove provisions that prohibit military bases and the entry of armed troops and nuclear weapons. This would grant American troops complete liberty to use the Philippines for US military operations. **AB**

People's protests against rising prices



Massive protests against oil, electricity and water monopolies began on April 24 because of recent hikes in the prices of their products and services. With their tremendous impact, it was as if a “triple whammy” had been put on the people.

Oil companies once again raised prices by P0.39 per liter on May 17 and 18. Prices of petroleum products are estimated to rise by up to P1.00 per liter this month. The

three companies composing the cartel (Petron, Shell and Caltex) have justified the move by citing renewed oil price hikes in the international market.

In the past months, electricity charges in Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog (areas serviced by Meralco) rose by as much 100-116% due to unjust PPA (purchased power adjustment) charges. The PPA has been added to electric bills to ensure the profits of independent power producers. It is anomalous because it obliges consumers to pay for the IPP's entire capacity even if a substantial portion of such capacity remains unutilized. Through the PPA, consumers pay for as much as 5,000 megawatts of excess capacity that they have not consumed.

In Meralco's case, P2.5835 (or 80%) of its current charge of P3.2341 for the PPA is paid to an independent power producer that, like Meralco, is also owned by the Lopezes.

Meralco would like to raise electricity charges further through the new system of “unbundling” that segregates charges into the following components: generation, transmission, distribution, supply, metering and universal charges. The system is in accordance with the Power Reform Act. Consumers would end up paying up to P1.12 more per kwh following the formula for “unbundling” drawn up by the Energy Regulatory Commission.

On the other hand, Maynilad and Manila Water Works announced in April that they would be raising water service charges by up to 94%. A case has been filed to contest this move.

The campaign against higher electric charges is led by BAYAN and POWER, a broad coalition composed of mass organizations, urban poor communities, consumer organizations, associations of middle forces, church people and other sectors.

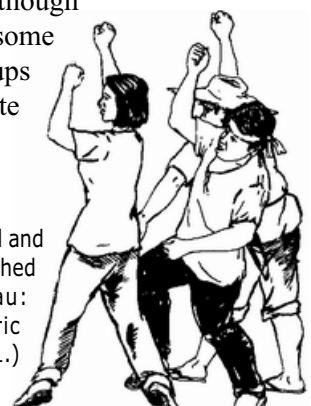
A 15-minute “black-out protest” conducted by the coalition on April 29 was joined by many Metro Manila communities. There have likewise been other forms of protest, such as stamping “under protest” on Meralco electric bills. Ilang Kababaihan, a women's group, has also burned electric bills as a symbolic form of protest. Others have filed petitions and cases in court and hold discussions on the issue in payment centers for electricity and water services.

In the provinces, electric cooperatives are also poised to raise electricity rates because NAPOCOR has hiked charges for the PPA and CERA (currency exchange rate adjustment). NAPOCOR has already imposed power cuts on several cooperatives for their failure to pay the higher rates.

In the face of intense criticisms of the “triple whammy”, congress and Malacañang have been forced to intervene and make a pretense of studying how to stop rising prices. The courts have also been compelled to issue temporary restraining orders on electricity and water rate hikes.

On May 9, Macapagal-Arroyo was forced to order NAPOCOR to reduce the PPA to P0.40 per kwh from an average of P1.25 per kwh. Although the lower rates will provide some temporary relief, militant groups continue to assert the complete abolition of the PPA. **AB**

(For a more detailed discussion on oil and electricity, read the primers published by the Party Information Bureau: Monopoly atbp. and Ang Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.)



May Day rallies demand Macapagal-Arroyo's ouster

Militant workers' organizations demanded the ouster of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime during commemorations of International Workers' Day and celebrations of the centenary of the workers' movement in the Philippines on May 1. About 75,000 people participated in rallies led by Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) nationwide. Macapagal-Arroyo was assailed as the main enemy of the working class and the people. BAYAN declared that the protest action on May 1 was "the beginning of the end" of Macapagal-Arroyo's regime.

In Metro Manila, up to 37,000 workers affiliated with KMU gathered in Mendiola, including delegations from Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon.

In Bacolod City, some 6,000 workers under KMU-National Federation of Sugar Workers rallied at the city center.

In Bukidnon, 6,000 workers, mostly sugar plantation laborers and BAYAN members, successfully rallied at Valencia City despite military harassment.

In Bicol, thousands of workers and other sectors gathered in the cities of Naga (5,000) and Legazpi (3,000). Organizations of peasants, government employees, drivers

and others expressed their solidarity for the workers.

In Leyte, up to 5,000 people rallied in the cities of Tacloban, Ormoc and Maasin and six other towns in the island.

In Cebu City, 3,000 members of KMU, BAYAN and GABRIELA rallied at the Metro Gaisano junction road. Drivers of public utility vehicles also staged a half-day strike.

In Iloilo City, some 3,000 members of KMU, BAYAN and the National Priests Organization of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente gathered at Barangay Lapuz Norte in La Paz, where the militant Federacion

Obreras de Filipinas (FOF) was established in 1929. FOF founder Jose Ma. Nava was honored during the rally.

In Davao City, thousands of militant workers were blocked when they tried to march towards the Matina campus of the University of Min-

danao where Macapagal-Arroyo was giving a speech before leaders and members of yellow unions. They held their program at the nearby Ateneo de Davao.

In Baguio City, hundreds of members of KMU and the Cordillera People's Alliance launched a march-rally along Session Road.

In Southern Tagalog, hundreds of workers rallied in Lucena and at the Cavite Export Processing Zone.

In Central Luzon, workers marched to Clark Air Base in Pampanga. **AB**



Mass actions on International Labor Day

The proletariat the world over once again showed its class unity and strength on May 1. In different parts of the globe, workers took to the streets, along with other oppressed classes and sectors from their respective countries, bannered the class, democratic and patriotic demands of the people and resistance to imperialism and local reaction.

Cuba: More than a million people trooped towards the center of Cuba in solidarity with the call of the Castro government against US imperialism's repressiveness and oppression of their country.

Russia: Hundreds of thousands of Russians joined marches and rallies in various parts of the country, bearing red flags and other symbols of socialism's

distinguished history in the country. In Moscow, at least 140,000 joined a demonstration against the country's capitalist system.

Turkey: Tens of thousands thronged to the streets of Istanbul to condemn the economic policy dictates of the IMF being implemented by the government. They also condemned Israel's terrorism against the Palestinian people. In

eastern Turkey, police violently dispersed the rally.

Italy: At least 75,000 union members joined a rally in Bologna. While carrying red flowers, they called for “peace, for jobs, for the defense of their rights and against terrorism”.

Spain: Up to 60,000 workers joined a rally in Madrid led by various labor groups. It was in preparation for a general strike that would be launched once the government withdraws social

insurance for the unemployed.

Indonesia: Thousands of workers poured out into the streets to call on the government to recognize Labor Day, demand higher minimum wages and the defiance of IMF dictates calling for the removal of subsidies on oil and electricity.

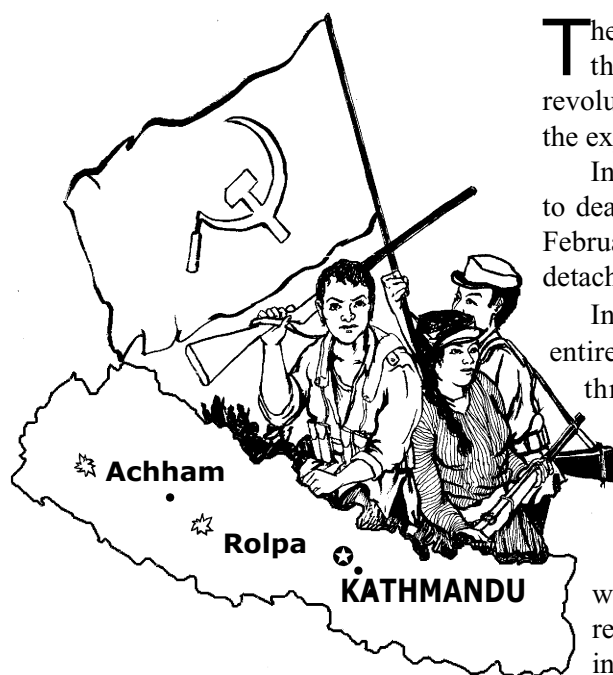
Croatia: Five thousand workers marched through Zagreb to oppose government plans to reduce labor rights.

Greece: In Athens, 3,000

workers burned effigies of Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and US Pres. George Bush to protest Israel’s attacks on Palestine.

Hong Kong: More than 500 pilots marched in the streets with Filipino workers to demand the implementation of minimum wages and protest the dwindling value of their wages in the face of growing profits raked in by airline companies in Hong Kong. **AB**

Revolutionary armed struggle in Nepal



The Kingdom of Nepal is a backward country in South Asia. It lies north of India and south of Tibet and China. It is nestled by the towering Himalayas where Mt. Everest, the world’s highest peak, is found. Nepal is currently ruled by a monarchy despite the establishment of a parliament in 1990 after broad democratic actions in the 1980s.

The fires of armed revolution are quickly spreading in Nepal. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), the revolutionary movement is persistently advancing against the rule of the exploiting classes.

In the past months, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) was able to deal heavy blows on the ruling reactionary system in Nepal. From February to March, revolutionary fighters raided in succession, police detachments in western Nepal, annihilating 200 policemen.

In April, a five-day nationwide strike was launched that shook the entire ruling system. Cries to establish a free republic reverberated throughout the country. At the same time, the PLA launched coordinated offensives against police detachments in Achham and Rolpa (*see map*) that annihilated more than 300 policemen.

The launching and expansion of people’s war

It was on February 13, 1996 when protracted people’s war was waged for the very first time to advance the new democratic revolution against the imperialists and the local reactionary classes in Nepal.

Prior to this, the revolutionary forces laid down the basic requisites for the establishment of a people’s army, including laying down the strategy and tactics of armed struggle, launching politico-military training and the corresponding changes in organization. Along with launching initial tactical offensives, the revolutionary forces went full steam in establishing guerrilla zones that consolidated the breadth and depth of the Party’s mass base in the country.

Since 1996, armed revolution has quickly gained strength in Nepal. The revolutionary mass base was developed step-by-step in the countryside by arousing, organizing and mobilizing the broad,

impoverished peasants in the Nepali countryside, conducting education and launching campaigns to improve the livelihood of the masses.

At the same time, raids were conducted on government agencies that caused the peasant masses extreme hardship and the most rabid elements in the communities were meted punishment. The revolutionary forces also organized and mobilized workers in the cities.

The PLA has gained expertise in waging guerrilla warfare through the use of self-made bombs and arms, traditional weapons such as the *khukhuris* (a bladed weapon) and working tools. It has launched daring raids on selected police detachments to accumulate and train in the use of modern weapons.

At present, the PLA is in a position to launch successful operations employing temporary battalions (composed of a few hundred Red fighters). It is in possession of hundreds of high-powered firearms and other modern military equipment. Temporary as well as permanent companies have been formed under various regional commands. There are dozens of regular platoons and hundreds of regular squads. In addition, thousands have been armed and trained as members of the people's militia.

In many areas in the countryside, people's political power exists in guerrilla zones and fronts. The revolutionary forces operate, on various levels, in 22 out of the country's 40 districts. In May 2001, people's governments in west Nepal were established. Police forces opted to withdraw from the area due to the strength and breadth of support for the armed revolution. Elections have already been conducted in the area to set up local united people's committees up to the village and district level.

The US' counterrevolutionary response and support for the Nepali government

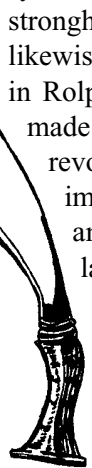
The reactionary government offered to negotiate in July 2001. The PLA entered into a ceasefire to pave the way for negotiations towards the establishment of a republic.

The negotiations collapsed after five months without achieving anything due to underhanded maneuvers by the Nepali monarchy and the inutility of the Nepali parliament to counteract them.

In November 2001, the Nepali government imposed martial law and mobilized the Royal Nepal Army (RNA), the armed forces under the monarchy's authority. Since then, the RNA has launched bloody attacks against the

people and the revolutionary movement.

In the past five months, hundreds of civilians in western and eastern Nepal have been massacred by the RNA to avenge its losses in armed encounters with the PLA. To cover up its crimes, the RNA reports them as "encounters" or "raids" on supposed revolutionary camps. In reality, the RNA's military operations are a systematic implementation of genocide in revolutionary strongholds. Captured activists and prisoners of war are likewise routinely massacred. In the latest "encounter" in Rolpa-Piuthan and Doti (western Nepal), the RNA made it appear that the civilians killed in the area were revolutionaries so that it could show off before its imperialist masters in the US and United Kingdom and lay down conditions for prolonging martial law.



The US supports the counterrevolutionary war and military dictatorship imposed by the monarchy in Nepal. It has included the PLA and CPN(M) in its list of those it considers "terrorists".

In January, US Sec. of State Colin Powell visited the country to begin preparations for large-scale intervention against the armed revolution and to establish permanent US military bases in the country. When Nepali prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba visited the US this May, plans for US armed intervention in the country were drawn. The US has allotted \$20 million in military aid, arms, ammunition and helicopters for the RNA's use in pursuing the revolutionary forces in the mountains.

The US has also ordered the abandonment of negotiations with the revolutionary forces as a tactic, despite calls for talks from a broad section of the people and even a number of reactionaries.

In response, the CPN(M) has established the United Revolutionary Peoples Council on the national level to represent the various nationalities, castes, women, organizations, united front committees and patriotic and democratic forces in liberated areas and raised the armed revolution in the country to a new level.

It is the breadth and strength achieved by the armed revolution in Nepal in a span of six years that has prepared the people and the revolutionary forces to confront intensifying and escalating attacks by reaction and armed intervention by US imperialism in the country. **AB**



14th IB troops ambushed in Eastern Samar

Red fighters ambushed a group of soldiers from the 14th IB on April 27. The tactical offensive was launched in Barangay Can-iray, Can-avid, Eastern Samar. A sergeant was killed in the ambush.

Bus company punished in Capiz

The Coronacion Chiva-Waling-Waling Command of Panay meted punishment on Ceres Bus Lines because of its refusal to abide by the policies of the revolutionary movement on taxation. The punitive action was conducted in Barangay Banate, Pontevedra, Capiz on April 19 with the burning of a Ceres passenger bus worth P2.4 million.

Death of 15 civilians in Oriental Mindoro condemned

Karapatan's Southern Tagalog chapter has condemned the death of at least 15 civilians and the wounding of an undetermined number after the military fired heavy artillery at Barangay Caramaguit, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro on May 16. According to Karapatan, elements of the

2nd Scout Ranger company fired howitzer shells at the barangay from early morning till past noon during pursuit operations against a New People's Army unit. The rights group said that the continuing operations have spilled over to the nearby barangays of Comunal and Baluingayo in Calapan City.

Only two bodies have been recovered because the military continues to prevent the media and members of human rights organizations from entering the area. Karapatan also reported the death of three Red fighters in the brutal operation.



Anti-minority order criticized by Ibalois

Ibalois from Benguet criticized in the first week of May Administrative Order No. 3 (AO 3 series of 2002) of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). AO 3 will be used to purchase the ancestral lands of the Ibalois so they could be ejected and the implementation of the \$1.1 billion San Roque Multipurpose Dam Project in Itogon, Benguet forcibly implemented. The new order states that the NCIP shall have the final say in granting permission to corporations to exploit natural resources within

ancestral lands, despite opposition from affected minority communities.

CAFGU harassment condemned in Surigao del Sur

Members of the Bad-as Integrated Stewardship Development Cooperative (Bisdeco), a farmers' organization in Lianga, Surigao del Sur, condemned their harassment at the hands of CAFGU elements. According to Bisdeco, CAFGU elements approached them while they were planting trees in Barangay Manyayay on April 20, held them at gunpoint, threatened them with bodily harm and accused them of being NPA supporters. In a petition filed with the Sangguniang Bayan of Lianga, Bisdeco members demanded that the CAFGU be prohibited from entering Manyayay.

Malampaya operations opposed

The Buklurang Lakas ng Mangingisda, a group of fishermen from Mindoro, opposed the operations of the Malampaya oilfields because of its adverse effects on their livelihood. They said that their fish catch has been practically reduced by half since the project started its operations in Palawan.



Masinloc Power Plant barricaded

Some 2,000 residents of Barangay Bani, Masinloc, Zambales charged into the Masinloc Coal-fired Thermal Power Plant before midnight of May 5 to demand compensation for the plant's forcible occupation of their lands. The residents barricaded major approaches to the plant while 20 *banca* (dugout canoe) operators patrolled the streets between the plant and the China Sea. The mass action temporarily paralyzed the plant's operations. The Masinloc Coal-fired Thermal Power Plant is one of the biggest suppliers of electricity to the entire island of Luzon.

Congress to probe Bayan Muna suppression

One-hundred fourteen congressmen supported a resolution calling for an investigation of state suppression of the Bayan Muna (BM) party. The resolution was filed by BM congress representative Satur Ocampo.

According to Ocampo, there have been 64 documented cases of human rights violations against BM members and supporters from February 2001 to April 2002. Most of the cases occurred in Southern Tagalog, Eastern Visayas, Western Visayas, Central Luzon and Bicol. More than 75% of the violations were perpe-

trated by the military, police and CAFGU elements.

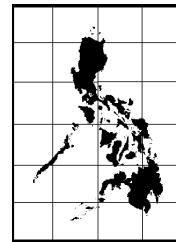
Implication of BAYAN in bombings condemned

Karapatan condemned the military's attempts to implicate three innocent civilians and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) in the April 21 bombing incident in General Santos City. According to Karapatan, one day before the bombings that claimed the lives of 15 persons and wounded 60 others took place, armed men in masks raided the Pasa Sambao Clinic where Jejhon Macalinsal, Abubakar Amilhasan and Arsul Ginta were and which also served as the BAYAN headquarters in General Santos City. Macalinsal was forced at gunpoint to call in a bomb threat to the Bayantel office. A day after the bombing, the police announced that the source of the bomb threat had been traced to the BAYAN office, and arrested the three men. On May 9, however, the police announced, without any accompanying explanation, that they had already captured the real culprits.

Congressmen scramble over funds

Congressmen manifested their greed this May as they quarrelled over the distribution of funds for infrastructure. The congressmen demanded that the P34.8 billion funds from the Department of Public Works and Highways be

divided equally instead of being allotted on the basis of the districts' particular needs. With this approved, they once again proposed that the amount be fattened up with P3 billion from the infrastructure budgets of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agrarian Reform. The congressmen made such insistent demands because they are able to pocket up to more than 50% of the infrastructure budgets for their districts in the form of kickbacks.



Case vs. Marcoses lost due to technicality

Due to a mere technicality, a 15-year case against the Marcoses involving ownership of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) was lost on May 6. Government prosecutors could not prove before the Sandiganbayan that the Marcoses were the true owners of PLDT because all the Philippine Commission on Good Government (PCGG) was able to present as evidence were photocopies and not original documents. Karapatan roundly criticized the PCGG for its stupidity.

Garment exports fall

Garment exports fell from January to April because of a near-25% reduction in garment imports by the US from the Phil-

ippines. The reduction was attributed to American buyers' shift to low-cost textiles and apparel. As a result, many garments factories are expected to close down, and up to 400,000 workers slated to lose their jobs by 2004.

US adds Libya, Syria and Cuba to list of target states

The US added in the first week of May, the names of Libya, Syria and Cuba to its list of target states. Prior to this, the US had already branded Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the "axis of evil", pinpointing them as leading targets for attacks and repression due to their anti-US stands.

US rejects international court

The Bush administration formally refused on May 6 to support the International Criminal Court, a permanent international judicial body that shall try persons who had perpetrated war crimes, genocide and other crimes against humanity. The US openly admitted to fears that the court could be used to try culpable American officials and military personnel.

Many other international treaties had also been rejected by the US due to adverse effects

on its economic and military interests. Among the agreements recently rebuffed by the US are the anti-ballistic missile proliferation treaty and the Kyoto accord which calls for the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

French people take action against Le Pen

More than a million people trooped to the streets on May 1 in various parts of France to protest the candidacy of ultra-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen and the growing fascist trend that he represents. In Paris, more than 250,000 people rallied while up to 900,000 massed up in other cities of France. Among them were labor groups that expressed solidarity for the people's calls against Le Pen and against capitalism and fascism. The French people expressed concern over Le Pen's stunning victory in the country's electoral preliminaries. Similar demonstrations were also held in Switzerland and Belgium. Due to strong antifascist and antiracist sentiments, Le Pen was defeated by Jacques Chirac in the election's second and final leg.



Ariel Sharon forced to withdraw troops from Gaza Strip

Israel prime minister Ariel Sharon was forced on May 13 to withdraw an impending attack on the Gaza Strip after more than 60,000 Israelis rallied against it. The impending attack was a reaction by the fascist Israeli cabinet to the latest suicide bombing in Tel Aviv.

Likewise, after being pelted with criticism and condemnation, Israel was compelled to forge an agreement with Palestine and free the Palestinian armed men and civilians who had been under siege at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. On May 9, Israel agreed to enter into an agreement on condition that 13 men among the Palestinians inside the church who were wanted in Israel would go into exile in Europe. The others were allowed to leave.

Despite strong international condemnation of Israel's attacks, the US has fully supported the former's actions. In May, the US senate and congress passed a resolution supporting these fascist acts as "counter-terrorist measures" and allotted more military aid to Israel.